

## **Historic, archived document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



# STATISTICAL SUMMARY

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS, U. S. D. A.

SS - 31

JUNE 12, 1945

## FEWER FARMERS - LARGER FARMS

The number of farmers (farm operators) in the United States decreased from more than 6 million in April 1940 to approximately 5½ million in April 1944, a reduction of nearly 10%. Such is the estimate recently made by the Bureau of the Census and BAE. Decrease said to represent mainly the concentration of farm land into hands of a smaller number of operators rather than a reduction in the amount of land under cultivation. Average size of farm increased from 174 acres in 1940 to 191 acres in 1944. Average amount of crop land harvested per farm rose from 53 acres in 1939 to 69 acres in 1943. Total acreage of crop land harvested was actually greater in 1943 than in 1939.

## RECORD WHEAT CROP STILL INDICATED

June conditions still indicate largest wheat crop ever grown here, 1,084,652,000 bushels, despite drought in Southwest and much bad weather elsewhere in belt. Harvest now on. *Winter wheat* estimate 797½ million bushels, second largest of record; *spring wheat* 287 million bushels—latter promising good yield but acreage is down.

## BIG OATS CROP - BARLEY AND RYE SMALL

*Oats* crop indicated 1.3 billion bushels, which would be 14 percent over last year and 25 percent above average, (1934-43). Such an oat crop would be second largest in past 20 years.

*Barley* crop prospect smallest since 1938; June 1 forecast 258 million bushels, about 9 percent below last year. Yield outlook good but acreage is 14 percent under last year.

*Rye* forecast 28 million bushels—very small crop; would be about one-third below average (1934-43). Acreage smallest in over 10 years.

*Corn* crop still being planted; June 1 showed corn planting much behind schedule.

## TOTAL FRUIT AMPLE - APPLE OUTLOOK POOR

*Peach* crop estimated 78¼ million bushels, a record large crop; would be 52 percent above last year's short crop and nearly 5 times the poor 1943 crop. Production in 10 southern states estimated 26 million bushels, record output. Georgia crop three-fourths above last year and largest since 1931.

But while peaches escaped the freezes—*apples* did not. June 1 conditions suggest smallest commercial apple crop ever grown, (No forecast figure yet).

Year crop indicated 31¼ million bushels, 1 percent under last year but 10 percent above 1934-43 average.

Prospective output California dried *prunes* 212,000 tons, 33 percent above small crop of last year and 3 percent above average. Prune and plum condition in other states spotted.

Citrus harvest largely finished. Total *orange* crop estimated 107 million boxes, compared with 103 million previous year and 85 million two years before (1942-43). Each year made a new record. California *Valencias* 37 million boxes, a new record. Total *grapefruit* crop 51.8 million boxes, 7 percent under record crop of last year. California *lemons* estimated 12.8 million boxes, 16 percent above 1943-44 crop but 14 percent under the near record crop of 1942-43.

## FAIRLY GOOD HAY PROSPECT

Total hay crop good, from June prospects, around 97 million tons; some 85 million tons tame hay crop and 12 million tons wild hay. This would be fairly large crop, though smaller than in last 3 years.

## HEAVY MILK PRODUCTION - BUTTER LOW

Total milk production during April estimated 10.8 billion pounds, an increase of 6% over April last year. Daily per capita output of milk was 2.59 pounds, highest April level in 15 years of record, and compares with 2.48 pounds year earlier. Milk production for the January-April period 38.3 billion pounds, compared with 37.3 in like months last year and 33.3 billion the 1934-43 average of same months. Production in first four months of this year equivalent to an annual output of over 121 billion pounds. Early grass and favorable feed and price conditions are responsible for record output.

Production of manufactured dairy products, except butter, continues near record level. Creamery *butter* output during March, 109 million pounds, was lowest for that month in 20 years.

## EGG PRODUCTION DOWN

Production of eggs during 1944 was 59% above 1935-39 average. Civilian consumption last year was 351 eggs per capita, 18% above prewar average (298 eggs per capita). Civilians used 73% of all eggs in trade last year; export and military used 23% and 4% was used in hatchings.

Egg production this year will probably be 8 to 10% below 1944. Because of fewer eggs dehydrated,

PARITY PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS AND ACTUAL PRICES RECEIVED

COMMODITY AND UNIT	ACTUAL PRICE		PARITY PRICE
	APR. 15 1945	MAY 15 1945	MAY 15 1945
Wheat, bu. . . . . dol.	1.49	1.49	1.53
Corn, bu. . . . . dol.	1.07	1.08	1.11
Oats, bu. . . . . dol.	.71	.69	.69
Cotton, lb. . . . . ct.	20.20	20.51	21.45
Potatoes, bu. . . . . dol.	1.74	1.77	1.25
Hogs, 100 lb. . . . . dol.	14.10	14.10	12.60
Beef cattle, 100 lb. . . dol.	12.70	12.90	9.38
Veal calves, 100 lb. . . dol.	14.00	13.90	11.70
Lambs, 100 lb. . . . . dol.	13.90	13.50	12.20
Butterfat, lb. . . . . ct.	50.5	50.2	<sup>1</sup> 43.1
Milk, wholesale, 100 lb. . dol.	3.12	3.08	<sup>1</sup> 2.49
Chickens, live, lb. . . . ct.	25.7	26.6	19.7
Eggs, doz. . . . . ct.	33.0	33.7	<sup>1</sup> 31.6

<sup>1</sup>Adjusted for seasonal variation.

civilians may receive slightly more than last year. Per capita civilian consumption in 1945 expected to average about an egg a day or 366 eggs for the year.

Egg production during April was 5% below April last year but otherwise highest on record for the month. An all-time high in output—17.7 eggs per hen—partly offset the 10% decrease in the number of hens. Average price received by farmers for eggs in mid April, 33 cents per dozen, 6 cents above last year. Average price in mid-May 34 cents, nearly 7 cents over a year ago. Demand for eggs and poultry very strong.

#### MEAT

Meat output during first half of 1945 will be at least 12% less than like period last year. Output will continue low during summer; in last quarter, may nearly equal same quarter of 1944. Total meat production this year now indicated at around 22.5 billion pounds (dressed meat basis), 9% under record output of last year.

Last fall's pig crop was only 31.3 million head, but favorable price and feed conditions will probably bring more pigs this fall. The 1944 spring pig crop totaled 55 million head, a reduction of 25% from year previous. This spring, breeding intentions reports have indicated a probable spring pig crop of 52 million head; more will be known about the spring pig crop soon.

Production of pork for the year now estimated at around 10.3 billion pounds, about 20% under last year but 40% above average for 1935-39.

Cattle numbers stood at record high of 82.4 million head at beginning of 1944. Number on hand beginning this year was 1% less, all of the reduction being in calves and young dairy heifers.

Output of lamb and mutton this year indicated around 930 million pounds, 9% under last year but 7% above the average.

Production of beef and veal this year now indicated about 11.2 billion pounds, roughly 5% above 1944.

Total meat output during first quarter of 1945 was about 11% less than in like period year ago.

#### SLIM STOCK OF FATS

Normally, stocks of fats and oils reach a peak in early spring; but this season inventories have declined since October 1, which in most years is low point. Stocks April 1, totaled slightly less than 1.9 billion pounds, nearly 800 million less than year earlier. Fats and oils for civilians in 1945 will be lowest in many years—consumption probably will total 38 to 40 pounds per capita. Supplies for civilian soap this year probably will be 10 to 15%

below 1944; drying oils may total around 25% less and perhaps 40% less than 1935-39 average.

#### COTTON HELD BY GOVERNMENT

On May 19, Commodity Credit Corporation held 3,803,872 bales of 1944 crop cotton. Of this quantity, 1,525,844 bales were in 1944 government loan and 2,278,028 bales had been acquired under 1944 cotton purchase program. In addition were also 1,439,000 bales of 1943 cotton under loan. Several million bales are also owned or held on producer's account by CCC.

#### NUMBER FARM WORKERS STILL LOW

About 10,000,000 persons were employed on farms May 1, around 50,000 less than a year ago. Number of hired workers 1,864,000 as compared with 1,989,000 a year ago. This reflected less than usual seasonal increase during April. Number of family workers, 8,153,000, compared with 8,079,000 a year ago. Present number of family workers is 8% below 1935-39 average.

#### FARM INCOME DOWN SOMEWHAT

Estimated farm income from products sold during May, \$1,445 million, compared with \$1,545 million a year ago. Government payments this May \$55 million, compared with \$93 million year ago. Farm income for the five months, January–May, \$7,513 million, compared with \$7,620 million in like period last year. Government payments January–May \$400 million, compared with \$454 million in same months last year.

#### MARKETING CHARGES LITTLE CHANGED

Charges for marketing a family market basket of farm food products totaled \$222 in April. This included about \$16 in government payments to marketing agencies. Total marketing charges have changed little since last September when they amounted to \$224, government payments then accounting for \$11 of that figure.

The farmers' share of the consumer's dollar spent for farm food products rose from 54 cents in March to 55 cents in April. This compared with 53 cents a year ago and 1935–39 average of 40 cents.

Retail cost of the market basket in April was \$454, not quite 1 percent above March. April retail price was exceeded twice during past year—in January and in July.

CURRENT INDEXES FOR AGRICULTURE		
INDEX NUMBERS	BASE PERIOD	MAY 1945
Prices received by farmers . . . . .	1910-14 = 100	200
Prices paid by farmers, interest and taxes . . . . .	1910-14 = 100	173
Parity ratio . . . . .	1910-14 = 100	116
Wholesale prices of food . . . . .	1910-14 = 100	166
Retail prices of food . . . . .	1910-14 = 100	<sup>1</sup> 176
Farm wage rates . . . . .	1910-14 = 100	<sup>1</sup> 335
Weekly factory earnings . . . . .	1910-14 = 100	<sup>2</sup> 429
RATIOS	LONG-TIME MAY - AVERAGE	MAY 1945
Hog-corn ratio, U. S. . . . .	11.4	13.1
Butterfat-feed ratio, U. S. . . . .	22.8	26.1
Milk-feed ratio, U. S. . . . .	1.12	1.27
Egg-feed ratio, U. S. . . . .	10.4	11.7
PRODUCTION COMPARISONS	JAN.-APR. 1944	JAN.-APR. 1945
Milk, (Bil. lb.) . . . . .	37.3	38.3
Eggs, (Bil.) . . . . .	23.7	22.2
Beef, (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) . . . . .	2,181	2,359
Lamb & Mutton (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) . . . . .	271	305
Pork & Lard (Mil. lb.) . . . . .	5,301	2,848
All meats (Dr. wt., mil. lb.) . . . . .	7,945	5,710

<sup>1</sup>April figure.

<sup>2</sup>Factory pay roll per employed worker adjusted for seasonal variation. March figure.

For more detailed information, write the Division of Economic Information, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C., or telephone Republic 4142—Branch 4407.